

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ZAGREB 00310 151136Z

ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, YO

SUBJECT: DOLANC AND BILIC VISIT DALMATIA

REF: ZAGREB 269

1. DURING WEEK OF APRIL 11, 1977, HIGH RANKING OFFICIALS OF YUGOSLAV LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS (LCY) STANE DOLANC AND JURE BILIC HAVE BEEN TRAVELLING IN DALMATIA FOR MEETINGS WITH POLITICAL ACTIVISTS OF THAT CROATIAN REGION. ON APRIL 11 AND APRIL 12, DOLANC, LCY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, AND BILIC, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, WERE IN SPLIT AND LATER TRAVELLED TO SIBENIK FOR DISCUSSIONS THERE ON APRIL 13.

2. PRESS REPORTS OF THE VISIT HAVE SO FAR FOCUSED ENTIRELY ON STATEMENTS MADE BY DOLANC AND HAVE SIMPLY NOTED BILIC'S PRESENCE AT THE MEETINGS. WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PREPARATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR'S PARTY CONGRESS, DOLANC HAS ADDRESSED A WIDE RANGE OF SUBJECTS BUT THE UNDERLYING THERE OF HIS REMARKS HAS BEEN THE ROLE OF THE LCY. ZAGREB DAILY "VJESNIK" QUOTES DOLANC ON APRIL 13 AS SAYING THAT THE COMMUNISTS ALONE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIETY. INSTEAD, "THE FRONT MUST BE BROADENED AND DEEPENED." ELABORATING ON THIS IDEA IN SIBENIK, DOLANC IS QUOTED BY VJESNIK AS ARGUING FOR AN EXPANDED

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PAGE 02 ZAGREB 00310 151136Z

ROLE FOR THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE OF WORKING PEOPLE (SAWPY), YUGOSLAVIA'S MASS ORGANIZATION, AND FOR COMMUNISTS TO BE MORE ACTIVE WITHIN THE SAWPY. DOLANC SAID, "THE SOCIALIST ALLIANCE MUST BECOME THE PLACE WHERE PEOPLE PRESENT INITIATIVES, BRING UP OPINIONS, AND RAISE DEMANDS ... AND BY THEIR INVOLVEMENT, MEMBERS OF THE LCY SHOULD AND MUST PLAY A LARGER ROLE."

3. COMMENT: THE JOINT VISIT TO DALMATIA BY DOLANC AND BILIC, TWO PRESUMED RIVALS, IS CONSISTENT WITH TITO'S RECENT EMPHASIS ON PARTY UNITY (REFTEL). IT ALSO PROVIDES SOME INSIGHT INTO THE RELATIVE STRENGTHS OF THE TWO MEN. DOLANC'S DOMINATION OF THE PRESS COVERAGE POINTS OUT THAT HE IS, AFTER ALL, THE PARTY'S EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AND DOES OUTRANK BILIC. THAT DOLANC COULD COME TO A PART OF CROATIA, BILIC'S HOME TERRITORY, AND ADVANCE THE LINE OF BROADENING PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL DECISION MAKING (TO WHICH BILIC IS REPORTEDLY OPPOSED), IS PERHAPS AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT SIGN OF HIS STRENGTH. KAISER

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